

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 IO-11 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /070 W

----- 029345

O R 191845Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5832

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2727

EO 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, AO, CG, ZA, XJ

SUBJ: ITALY, THE EC, ANGOLA AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

REF: A) ROME 2591 B) STATE 37690

SUMMARY: IN BROAD-RANGING CONVERSATION, MFA OFFICIAL HAS REVIEWED FOR US A) EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS' DEBATE ON ANGOLA, B) ITALIAN POINT OF VIEW ON RECOGNITION OF MPLA, C) UPCOMING EC MINISTERS DEBATE ON ANGOLA, D) ITALIAN APPREHENSIONS RE POSSIBLE FURTHER CONFLICT AND POLITICAL DETERIORATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. END SUMMARY

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1. IN FEB. 19 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, MFA'S OFFICE DIRECTOR FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, RACHELE, CONFIRMED EMBASSY LUXEMBOURG'S REPORT THAT EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG WAS DOMINATED BY ANGOLAN ISSUE. ACCORDING TO RACHELE TIME WAS TAKEN UP IN DISCUSSION OF LEGAL ASPECTS BEARING ON RECOGNITION. IN THE END ALL CONCURRED THAT MPLA QUALIFIED UNDER ALL RELEVANT CRITERIA AS THE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA. THE TEMPERATURE ROSE WHEN THE QUESTION OF TIMING WAS DIRECTLY ADDRESSED. THE FRENCH WERE OBDDURATE FOR PROMPT RECOGNITION, BEING WILLING TO DELAY ONLY HOURS, RATHER THAN DAYS AS OTHERS SUGGESTED. THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF A JOINT EC "FRAMEWORK" STATEMENT SETTING FORTH CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN GOVERNMENTS' DECISION TO RECOGNIZE. HOWEVER, THE DIFFERING EXTANT NATIONAL POSITIONS ON ANGOLA (SOME HAD RECOGNIZED IT AS A STATE, OTHERS ONLY ITS INDEPENDENCE), MADE SUCH A DRAFTING EXERCISE IMPRACTICAL. THUS NO JOINT STATEMENT WAS ISSUED; THE SUBSTANCE AND TIMING OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY DECISIONS ON RECOGNITION WAS LEFT TO EACH.

2. RACHELE SAID THAT FRENCH PRIVATE EXPLANATION OF ITS HASTE TO RECOGNIZE MPLA WAS SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME AS ITS PUBLIC POSITION, I.E., THAT FRANCE WAS UNDER CONSIDERABLE "PRESSURE" FROM MODERATE AFRICAN FRANCOPHONE STATES, E.G., IVORY COAST AND GABON. THEIR INTENTION, AND FRANCE'S, WAS TO QUICKLY "TO THE RESCUE" OF THE MPLA, OPENING CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND INFLUENCING IN ALL FEASIBLE WAYS IN REGARDS TO THE CUBAN PRESENCE AND REACHING ACCOMODATIONS WITH ANGOLA'S NEIGHBORS. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, RACHELE NOTED THAT NETO HAS BEEN BELIEVED TO BE IRKED WITH FRENCH SUPPORT OF THE FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF CABINDA AND THAT THE FRENCH MOVE MIGHT MOLLIFY NETO TO SOME EXTENT.

3. GOI RECOGNITION OF THE MPLA INVOLVED TWO SEPARATE STATEMENTS (ALTHOUGH THAT FACT IS NOT REFLECTED IN ITALIAN PRESS). THE FIRST WAS A BRIEF FACTUAL STATEMENT OF RECOGNITION. THE SECOND, ISSUED AS A PRESS RELEASE AN HOUR OR SO AFTER THE FIRST, READS AS FOLLOWS (EMBASSY TRANSLATION).
"AT THE MOMENT OF RECOGNITION OF THE POPULAR GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA, ITALY REPEATS ITS FERVENT HOPE THAT THAT GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO BRING ABOUT PEACE AND NATIONAL UNITY THROUGH THE CESSATION OF ALL FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION, AND THROUGH
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THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL ANGOLESE IN THE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY, IN THE INTEREST OF SECURITY AND COOPERATION FOR THE ENTIRE REGION. ITALY EXPRESSES ITS CONVICTION THAT SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE FRIENDSHIP WHICH BINDS THE PEOPLES OF ITALY AND ANGOLA AND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES."

4. RACHELE NOTED THAT THE ITALIAN RECOGNITION HAD BEEN CAREFULLY STRUCTURED AND PHRASED SO AS TO STRESS THE LEGAL, TECHNICAL AND OBJECTIVE CRITERIA UNDERLYING IT, BUT SO AS NOT TO IMPLY APPROVAL OF THE REGIME. IN FACT THE FOREGOING STATEMENT IS DESIGNED TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE MPLA ITALIAN CONCERNS ABOUT CONTINUING CUBAN (AND RUSSIAN) MILITARY PRESENCE, THEIR HOPES REGARDING PARTICIPATION OF ALL ANGLAN FACTIONS IN GOVERNANCE, AND MISGIVINGS CONCERNING FUTURE POLITICAL STABILITY AMONG ANGOLA AND ITS NEIGHBORS. ITALY BELIEVES THERE ARE "TENDENCIES" WITHIN THE MPLA WHICH MUST BE IDENTIFIED AND ENCOURAGED. THESE ELEMENTS TRULY SEEK INTERNATIONAL NON-ALIGNMENT AND, WHILE RADICAL, ARE NOT RADICAL DOCTRINAIRE SOCIALISTS. SOME OF THEM EVEN ADVOCATE REALISTIC AND CONSTRUCTIVE SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA.

5. "THE END OF THE WAR IN ANGOLA IS JUST THE BEGINNING" SAID RACHELE. ONE CAN HOPE THAT THE MPLA, RUSSIANS AND CUBANS WILL TURN THEIR ATTENTION TO RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, IF THEY DECIDE TO "EXPORT THEIR REVOLUTION" TO ANY OF ANGOLA'S NEIGHBORS, INCLUDING NAMIBIA, SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE WORLD WILL HAVE A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME. FOR EXAMPLE, DAUNDA HAS PUT A LOT OF CHIPS ON ENCOURAGING THE SMITH-NKOME DIALOGUE, WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES WITH VORSTER. IF ANGOLA-BASED GUERRILLAS BEGIN INCURSIONS INTO RHODESIA ON ANY MEANINGFUL SCALE, CURRENT PROGRESS WILL HAVE BEEN LOST AND SMITH AND VORSTER WILL BE FACED WITH A NEW SET OF DECISIONS. VORSTER, FOR HIS PART, SHOULD NOW RECOGNIZE THAT HE MUST MAKE HIS PEACE WITH THE MODERATE ELEMENTS OF SWAPO IN NAMIBIA BEFORE SWAPO BECOMES A TOTAL INSTRUMENT OF SUBVERSION FROM WITHIN.

6. WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO OUR DEMARCHE CONCERNING ASSISTANCE TO ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE, (REF B), RACHELE SAID THE GOI FULLY AGREES WITH THE SUBSTANCE OF THE US POSITION. HE NOTED THAT THE EC MINISTERS MEETING ON MANDAY, FEB. 23, WILL AGAIN EXAMINE THE

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ANGOLAN SCENE, EVALUATING THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE CONTEXT OF DETENTE AND WITH REFERENCE TO THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENTS ON ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE IN PARTICULAR, AND SOUTHERN AFRICA IN GENERAL. WHEN ASKED, RACHELE SEEMED DUBIOUS THAT ANY SPECIFIC ACTION DECISIONS WOULD EMERGE FROM THAT MEETING OR THAT EVEN EC CONTINGENCY PLANNING WOULD BE ORDERED. HE NOTED AGAIN THAT INDICATIONS OF SPILLAGE OF CONFLICT INTO AREAS ADJACENT TO ANGOLA WOULD MAKE SUPPORT OF ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE A "HIGH PRIORITY" MATTER FOR THE NINE.

7. EMBOFF URGED THAT ITALY ITSELF GIVE PROMPT AND URGENT CONSIDERATION TO WHAT IT CAN NOW DO TO SUPPORT ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE, AND NOTED, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, THAT IF FIGHTING SPREADS INTO, SAY, NAMIBIA OR ZAIRE, EC PLANS FOR THAT CONTINGENCY SHOULD ALREADY BE AT HAND AND READY FOR IMPLEMENTATION.

RACHELE SAID HE WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD AND LET US KNOW GOI
REACTIONS TO OUR DEMARCHE. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONAL SECURITY, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, LIBERATION FRONTS, BRIEFING MATERIALS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME02727
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760062-1066
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760234/aaaabdsb.tel
Line Count: 171
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ROME 2591, 76 STATE 37690
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <28 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALY, THE EC, ANGOLA AND SOUTHERN AFRICA
TAGS: PFOR, AO, CG, ZA, XJ, MPLA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006